

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. An unsolicited e-mail internet protocol source address verification method comprising:
 - receiving a request for authorization to forward an electronic mail message;
 - responding to said request for authorization to forward said electronic mail
 - message; and
 - 10 handling receipt of said electronic mail message.
2. An unsolicited e-mail internet protocol source address verification method of Claim 1 wherein said request is initiated by a source of said electronic mail message and said request asks a simple mail transfer protocol agent for authorization to send an
- 15 electronic mail message to a destination serviced by said simple mail transfer protocol agent.
3. An unsolicited e-mail internet protocol source address verification method of Claim 1 wherein responding to said request includes an authorization indicator.
- 20 4. An unsolicited e-mail internet protocol source address verification method of Claim 1 wherein said authorization indicator is send to a source address identified in said request.

5. An unsolicited e-mail internet protocol source address verification method of Claim 1 further comprising performing an indication generator process in which an authorization indicator is generated.

5 6. An unsolicited e-mail internet protocol source address verification method of Claim 5 wherein said authorization indicator is a unique bit string.

7. An unsolicited e-mail internet protocol source address verification method of Claim 1 further comprising tracking said source address.

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8. An unsolicited e-mail internet protocol source address verification method of Claim 1 further comprising inserting an entry into said electronic mail message indicating said address said authorization indicator is sent to before forwarding said electronic mail message to an end use destination.

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9. An unsolicited e-mail internet protocol source address verification method of Claim 1 further comprising:

extracting a request source address from said request; and

utilizing said request source address as a destination address in a header file of a

20 return package including authorization indicator information.

10. An unsolicited e-mail internet protocol source address verification method of Claim 1 further comprising verifying the source address included in the received electronic message against the address the authorization indicator is sent to.

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11. A computer system comprising:

a processor for processing information and instructions, including instructions for verifying and tracking sources of unsolicited electronic messages; and

a memory for storing information and instructions, including instructions for verifying and tracking sources of said unsolicited electronic messages, said memory coupled to said processor.

12. A computer system of claim 11 wherein said instructions direct determination of electronic message authorization.

13. A computer system of claim 11 wherein said instructions include:

formulating a request for permission to forward an electronic message including a permission request source address;

analyzing said request for permission;

sending a permission reply to said permission request source address;

forwarding an electronic message, including said permission indicator in a header;

and

tracking said permission request source address and a source address of said electronic message when received.

14. A computer system of claim 13 wherein a message initiator inserts an indication in a header of a communication packet that said initiator is attempting to establish a communication link for a purpose of forwarding a message to a particular destination, said header also includes an indication of an initiator or source address.

15. A computer system of claim 13 wherein said permission reply includes a permission indicator.

16. A computer system of claim 15 wherein a time stamp is maintained of when said permission indicator is generated.

17. An unsolicited electronic message source tracking method comprising:
obtaining a verification indication; and
forwarding an unsolicited electronic message with said verification indication.

18. An unsolicited electronic message source tracking method of Claim 17 further comprising transmitting a request to send said unsolicited electronic message, wherein said request includes a request sender's identification.

19. An unsolicited electronic message source tracking method of Claim 19 wherein said request is transmitted to a simple mail transfer protocol agent and said simple mail transfer protocol agent forwards a verification indicator to a request sender's source address.

20. An unsolicited electronic message source tracking method of Claim 19 said verification indicator is a unique bit string.